

ANNOUNCER: You've tuned in to another edition of The Break Room, a

weekly conversation about how the City of St Augustine

works from those who do the work everyday. Hosted by the

City of St Augustine's Communications Director, Melissa

Wissel. The Break Room offers a closer look at the different

City departments and provides updates on current and upcoming

projects and events. And now your host, Melissa Wissel.

MELISSA: Welcome to The Break Room. Thanks for tuning in. I'm

Melissa Wissel, Communications Director for the City of St

Augustine. Fourth of July is right around the corner, of

Concerts in the Plaza are underway. So I've invited the

City's Event and Venue Coordinator, Cori Niles to join

me in studio this week to talk about all things concerts and

4th of July. Cori, welcome back.

CORI: Thank you for having me again.

MELISSA: So, overview of your job in general. Events and Venue

Coordinator. You do everything relating to Francis Field,

Concerts, 4th of July. Tell me a little bit about what you do

for the City. CORI: I definitely try to help plan all of our

larger events as well as our private events that rent the

field from us, and also events that rent the Galimore Center

from us. For 4th of July, I
just kind of put all the pieces

together with our different
departments, the Police, the

Streets and Grounds, the
fireworks, the All-Star

Orchestra that plays in the
gazebo. So, it's just

connecting the... MELISSA: Solid Waste.
CORI: Solid Waste... MELISSA: Streets and Grounds. It's no, it's no

big deal. It's a little all in
a days work. You make it sound

easy. You make it look great
and fantastic. It goes off

without a hitch. You did
mention things like Police. So,

we've got traffic control,
crowd control. We have

performances. Let's jump

right in and tell us about 4th of

July. What is the day look like
for folks wanting to come to

St Augustine? CORI: Okay, Fourth
of July will be very nostalgic

like every year previous. We
will do the fireworks at 9:30. It'll be a 20-minute
show. So, it'll run til almost

ten o'clock. We will have
All-Star Orchestra like we

always do in the Gazebo in the
plaza. They will play 6-8. Everybody loves that
kind of American feel that they

bring. It's a eighteen-piece
orchestra that we've always

had. We will also run the
shuttles that evening. Due to

street closures and just the
amount of traffic. The shuttles

are a great way to get people

into the City and not get the

cars into the City. They

will run on the island as

normal. We'll run from 6 PM til

midnight. Give or take a few

minutes, just depending on how

many people we have. And we will

have stops like normal at RB

Hunt Elementary School, the

Amphitheater, and Anastasia

Baptist Church. So the shuttle.

MELISSA: Can you park at the Alligator Farm?

CORI: Yes, the Alligator Farm. You

will be able to park there and

then there will be people

directing traffic to get you

across the street to RB Hunt.

So, you'll ride the shuttle back

to RB Hunt to get back to

your car and from RB Hunt to
get downtown. MELISSA: And only on the

island. CORI: Only on the island. MELISSA: We
don't do the Health Department,

San Marco, or Broudy for this
one. CORI: No, the traffic's too bad.

MELISSA: Too much traffic. CORI: Yup. Would never
work. We

definitely couldn't have that
continual loop every 15 minutes

like we do on the island. MELISSA: Okay.
So, the shuttle just for

everyone who's listening, the
shuttle service for Fourth of

July Fireworks is only on
Anastasia Island. CORI: Only on

Anastasia Island. It is a
conglomerate, or collaboration, I

guess. MELISSA: Collaboration, right.
CORI: With the City of St

Augustine and Old Town Trolleys

that runs a shuttle for us.

MELISSA: And it's a continuous loop.

Hop on, hop

off at just from your parking

to the drop. CORI: Yes. And the drop

location is right at the mouth

of the Bridge of Lions in the

cul-de-sac where the

Bridgetender Parks. They'll

drop you off. You can walk over

the bridge or choose to stand

on the bridge and watch

fireworks. It's a great vantage

point and then walk back and

they will tell you what shuttle

to get on to take you to what

parking lot in the evening when

everything's over. MELISSA: And be

patient. CORI: Be very patient. MELISSA: When

you're coming back. CORI: That first
initial rush of people, you know,

they will the shuttles will be
queued up and ready to go. But

once they get going, they do
have to get to the lots and

drop and then come back. So,
there could be a little bit of

waiting. MELISSA: So don't rush to get
back to the shuttle. If you take

the shuttle in, just make your,
take your time getting back

over there. CORI: Maybe after the
fireworks, enjoy some of the

restaurants, or go have an ice
cream, and then make your way

back to the shuttle. And once
that initial rush dies down,

it'll be less busy. MELISSA: And the parking garage is open. But

that also fills up. So again, be patient with that. If you're

on the fourth floor, you're not going to get out very quickly.

CORI: No, no. Now, they do have police officers that try their

hardest and they've been doing it for years, they will

try to get everybody out as fast as possible. But with the

street construction at US-1 and West Castillo. It it will

take a little bit of time to get people out of there. MELISSA: Wow.

And it's it's Fourth of July, so just take it all in and

enjoy. And we have a performance in front of City

Hall. Are we doing that this
year? CORI: That's for Light Up

Night. MELISSA: That's Light Up

Night. Yes. Thank you for

correcting me. I forgot about
that. So this is strictly in

the Plaza. For the All

Star Orchestra. Nostalgic

Americana. Fireworks on
the Bayfront. CORI: Fireworks on the

Bayfront. MELISSA: Do I need to come in
early? Probably a good idea. CORI: I

would say come in early. You
will notice a lot of street

closures around the eight
o'clock time frame, but if

there's a lot of pedestrian
traffic, the police will close

the streets earlier. So, come

in, enjoy maybe a midday lunch,

dinner, get some ice cream, put
out a blanket, and come watch

the fireworks. Spend the day.

Plan on spending the day. MELISSA: Spend

the day. And the Bayfront
does get shut down, the street

there does get closed. So.

You can stand in the the

street on Anita Menendez or put
chairs up on the Bayfront. The

Fort Lawn is a great spot.

It'll be you know packed. MELISSA: And people

do get their chairs out there
early. If you're if you are

local, you could drive down
early. Put your chairs out.

And then go find your
parking and and just save your

spot. I do remember last year, I
was downtown. They played

music there along the
Bayfront, kind of they have a

little party vibe going. CORI: So all
day. From about noon or so

on, we will have live music. Not
live music. It will be

amplified. Yeah. Amplified
music that will play, so you

know, people could come back to
their chairs, eat their lunch,

go walk and see some of the
sites, come back, and enjoy a

little bit more of the City
and you know, just enjoy the music. MELISSA: And all of

this is on the website. CityStAug.com/fireworks.

Alright. If you're just now

tuning in, you are listening to
The Break Room. I have Cori

Niles in studio this week. She
is our Events and Venue

Coordinator. She is the magic
behind putting together the

Fourth of July Fireworks Over
the Matanzas. But you also are

in charge of Concerts in the
Plaza. Let's talk a little bit

about concerts. That's
ongoing this summer. Tell me

about that. CORI: It is. It is
every Thursday night for 14

Thursdays during the summer.
Concert series that we do. This

year we did change the time. So
we do a 6 to 8 PM concert.

Gives people a chance to still
drive home when it's light out,

or enjoy some of the

restaurants, bars, dessert

places when the concert's over.

MELISSA: And how is that? Do you see that,

that's making a difference?

People we've talked about this

in the past. People tended to
leave sort of at that halfway mark.

CORI: Yeah. once that halfway mark
would hit when we did the later

concerts, a lot of people would
leave, because they don't like

to drive in the dark, or walk
back to their cars in the dark.

This has helped out the
last several Thursdays with

people staying for the whole
concert being able to enjoy it,

and even be able to enjoy a
little bit of the downtown

businesses after the concert.

MELISSA: Now I will I will comment. We

did have to cancel one. But

let's talk about cancellations.

What do I do? How do I know? CORI: So

we, luckily the one that we did

have to cancel. We postponed to

the end of the series. So you

will get to see them. All of

our cancellations are done as

soon as we possibly can. We try

to wait till the last minute.

That way we don't have

to cancel. But, as soon as the

cancellation notice is called. We

put it on our website. It's on

all of our social media. You

can always call into me. A lot

of times people will call and

just ask. MELISSA: But we'll put

that alert on the homepage of
the website, too. So even if you

just go to CityStAug.com. If it's cancelled.. CORI: You don't have to
search. The alert pops up

and it'll run from the time
it's till the next morning, so

everybody knows that it's
cancelled. MELISSA: And we do try to

reschedule those. Tack
it on to the end of the season.

CORI: We do. If we have room, in
the end, we will definitely try

to tack them on. Because we
don't want to have to cancel

any of them. We'd like to get
as many in as possible. MELISSA: Tell us

a little bit about who we have
for the lineup this summer. I

know we've changed it up the

last couple of years and I

think, you know, to people's enjoyment. We have some of

the folks that have been coming for many years. The bands, that

is. And we also have some new ones. Can you give lineup? Even if they've

already passed. CORI: Yeah. Yeah.

Our starter band this year was

Str8Up. They were a wonderful performer. Had a huge

following that evening. It was a lot of fun. Lot of dancing.

Lot of energy. The Morrow Family Band. The Driftwoods are

slated to play or will play.

Dewey Via, Bedrock Band, Red

Level Band. We've got The Committee which has been there

for multiple years. MELISSA: Playing around for years in town. CORI: We

even have the Sauce Boss, which.

MELISSA: Excellent. CORI: A lot of people know

him. He's kind of a fun act.

We've got a little bit of

flamenco that'll come in. So, we really do a variety of bands

and different style music.

That way, we can hit kind of

every genre, so people can enjoy it all summer long. MELISSA: So, Concerts

in the Plaza and even for Fourth of July. Bring my lawn

chair. Bring my picnic blanket.

No alcohol, but bring your food,

snacks, picnic. CORI: Absolutely.

We have many many families that

bring a picnic blanket and a cooler. And sit there and they

have dinner even with their

kids. The kids enjoy the

concerts too, because it's a

kind of a safe area to run

around and play and just be a

kid. The parents can enjoy

the concert. It's great.

Yes. Definitely no alcohol, but

absolutely we see a lot of

people that bring concert, or

bring coolers for both of

those. MELISSA: The parking, we talked a

little bit about the parking

for Fourth of July. But parking

for concerts, anywhere around

town. We do want to caution

folks to notice if you're

parking in a City monitored,

managed lot or area, or a

privately owned. And then the

parking garage, if folks aren't
aware, we have a local St

Johns County Park Now Card.

Which gets you into the parking

garage for \$3. So yeah, it's
not so bad to park at the

parking garage walk down. CORI: No, and
with the earlier concert time,

you can walk back up St

George to get to your car, and

you know, stop along the way for
a popsicle or an ice cream.

MELISSA: Doesn't seem so late. Yeah. That
6 - 8's working out well.

And the bands like it, I think,
too. CORI: Yeah. The bands do.

They like to set up a little
bit earlier and and get sound

checks done and, you know for
the ones that are working on

Friday morning. It's nice
to get home a little earlier.

MELISSA: Before we wrap up, tell me a
little bit about, we talked
about Fourth of July, which is
CityStAug.com/Fireworks. We've got Concerts
in the Plaza. CityStAug.com/Concerts. Of
course, both of those have

buttons on the homepage
Tell our listeners a little bit

about the Galimore, that space
that's available for rent, what

happens down there, before we
have to close up today. CORI: Yes,

the Willie Gallmore Center is
a community center that we rent

out. We currently have salsa
dancing, karate classes, hip

hop classes. People rent it
for weddings, receptions, baby

showers. It's a really great
space. It's a large, 50 by 50

room. The rental includes
tables, chairs, we have an ice

machine, full kitchen, so it
it's really, a very utilized

space, for just... MELISSA: Very affordable. CORI: Very affordable. For just
\$35 an hour, \$100 refundable

deposit, extremely affordable.

MELISSA: Playground outside. CORI: There is a

playground outside. We've got
some open space, where sometimes

people bring grills and
barbecue on the side, and then

you know use the space to
eat in. A lot of family reunions

that happen. MELISSA: The other
thing for folks to know is

there is a swimming pool down
there. And we have the YMCA runs

the summer camp that's out of
that, correct? CORI: Yes, so the YMCA

runs a summer camp, and then we
contract the YMCA also to run

the pool as far as the
lifeguards and managing the

pool itself. Very
affordable. It's two dollars, if

you're not a member. If you are
a member, it's a dollar for

members, seniors, and children.

MELISSA: Yeah,

open all, open through Labor
Day. CORI: Yup, open through Labor

Day. Actually, I think they
extended it to the end of

September now. It's open

every day except for Sundays.

They're not open Sundays.

MELISSA: They have the hours on the

website. CORI: Yeah, for sure. Hours
are on the website. We have

lap swimming. We have family
swimming, and then they block

out a period where the summer
camp swim and then they open

back up for family swimming.

That way there's not that kind

of mingling and people can
enjoy if they want to do laps

with no, all of that

splashing. MELISSA: That ruckus. Great. Yeah. Well,

you stay pretty busy in the

Events and Venue Division. CORI: Very

busy. MEILISSA: Thank you for coming and
telling us about 4th of July,

The Fireworks Over the
Matanzas. We will give a shout

out... who's our fireworks
provider? CORI: Santore and Sons.

MELISSA: They've been doing it for quite
a long time. They do play

music. Unfortunately, People
do ask us if that's on the

radio and it is not. So you
need to be down close to the

bayfront to hear the music.
But thanks for coming in and

seeing us. CORI: Thank you for having
me. MELISSA: And thank you for all that

you do to make the concerts
happen and 4th of July. It's a

lot of work and we appreciate
that. CORI: Thank you. MELISSA: If you missed

part of this broadcast or
want to tune in and hear our

past interviews, you can find
that at CityStAugRadio.com. You can also find us where
you find your favorite

podcasts. We're on speakers,
Spotify, iHeartRadio, and more.

That can also be found at CityStAugRadio.com. We

want to keep you informed about
what's happening in and around

the City. And most importantly
that you hear it here from the

people doing the work and
making it happen every day.

Follow us on our social media.

You'll see us on Facebook,

Twitter, and Instagram @CityStAug. Until next time.

Thanks for tuning in. ANNOUNCER: You've been
listening to The Break Room, a

weekly program addressing
projects and programs offered

by the City of St Augustine.

Join us each week as the City's Communications

Director Melissa Wissel has

in-depth conversations with the

people who make our town work

to meet the needs of our

community. The Break Room is

produced by Communication

Specialist for the City of St.

Augustine, Cindy Walker. See you

at this time next week for

another edition of The

Break Room.